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# SYSTEMS AND METHODS FOR SELECTIVE PAGING

## RELATED APPLICATIONS

Reference is made to co-pending patent applications filed on September 19,

1997, entitled "Paging Transceivers and Methods for Selectively Retrieving

a message application Serial No. 08/934,143  
Information," "Pager Transceivers and Methods for Performing Action on

a Messages  
Information at Desired Times," and "Pager Transceivers and Methods for Selectively

a Messages  
Erasing Information," each filed by Richard J. Helferich.

## FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates generally to systems and methods for selective paging and, more particularly, to paging systems and methods for selectively paging in response to messages received at a plurality of sources.

## BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

In general, a paging receiver can be classified into one of four categories: an alert or tone only paging receiver, a numeric paging receiving, an alphanumeric paging receiver, or a voice paging receiver. One common characteristic of all of these paging receivers is that they monitor the air waves and notify the user when their particular address has been detected. For the alert or tone only paging receiver, the paging receiver would generate a tone or beep when its address is detected. The other

paging receivers, upon detecting their address, would additionally store a message associated with the address signal and display or play it to the user. The message for a numeric paging receiver would be a set of numbers, typically the calling person's telephone number, and the message for an alphanumeric paging receiver would be a set of numbers and/or letters. The user of an alphanumeric paging receiver could therefore receive a message in the form of a telephone number with some descriptive text. For the voice paging receiver, the message that is stored is a voice message that the user can later play to hear the message.

A paging receiver is typically a rather small electronic device and, accordingly, has a limited amount of memory for storing messages that have been received from a base station in a paging system. Because of the relatively small size of the memory, the paging receiver can store only a limited number of messages. A user can delete messages from memory but will oftentimes desire to save a message, such as temporarily until the user makes a note of the message or until he or she is able to respond to the page. The messages that are saved in memory, however, reduce the space in memory that is available to receive new messages. This demand on space in memory is increasing as the size of the messages continue to grow and as users receive a greater number of messages. Although more memory can be added to accommodate more messages, the added cost and space needed for extra memory runs counter to the desires to keep the paging receiver small and inexpensive. A need therefore exists for a paging receiver which can display <sup>and/or play</sup> messages while efficiently



received by all paging transceivers located within the coverage area of the base station antenna. The paging transceivers, on the other hand, must operate at lower power levels and often cannot transmit signals at sufficiently high levels to reach the base station. For example, when a paging transceiver is located in a basement of a building, in a subway, or in an airplane, the paging transceiver may be unable to issue a reply that can reach the base station. As a result, the base station may continue to transmit a page to a paging transceiver and the paging transceiver will continue to receive the message but the base station cannot detect the reply being issued by the paging transceiver. This unnecessary transmission of duplicate messages and the ineffectual reply signals transmitted by the paging transceivers consume valuable resources of the paging system and of the paging transceiver.

For safety reasons, a user may at times have to turn off his or her paging transceiver. For instance, when the user is on an airplane, the transmissions from the paging transceiver can interfere with the instrumentation or communication within the cockpit of the plane. The paging transceiver therefore should not be operating within the plane or around other electronic equipment that are sensitive to interference from the signals transmitted by the paging transceiver. As another example, if the user is in an environment that contains electronic detonators for explosive materials, the signals transmitted by the paging transceiver could possibly trigger an explosion. The user therefore must turn his or her paging transceiver off to ensure that it does not transmit any reply or acknowledgment signals in response to a received page. Although it may

Q be dangerous for the paging transceivers to issue a reply signal in these situations, the signals transmitted by the base station may at times be safely received by the paging transceiver. Since the paging transceiver automatically issues a reply in response to a received message, the paging transceiver must nonetheless be turned off so as to not pose a risk to the user. During these times that the paging transceiver must be turned off, the user unfortunately is unable to receive any page or message. A need therefore exists for a paging transceiver that can notify a user of a message without automatically generating a reply message or acknowledgment to the base station.

### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention solves the problems described above with methods and systems for selective paging. A paging system notifies a paging transceiver that a message has been received but does not initially transmit the associated message. The user, upon being notified of the message, can then download the entire message at a time convenient to the user, which allows the user to download messages at less-expensive off-peak hours and allows the user to place the paging transceiver at a location where it can easily receive the message and reply to the message. Since the messages are not initially transmitted to the paging transceiver, the paging transceiver can receive and store a greater number of pages with minimal increase in the size of memory. Further, because entire messages are not automatically transmitted and

since the user can position the paging transceiver to issue a sufficiently strong reply, traffic in the paging system can be controlled and actually reduced.

The system may transmit some identifying information about the page to the user without sending the entire message. For instance, the base station may identify the type of message, such as email, voice, or text, and also indicate the caller or other descriptive material about the message. The user can then determine the priority of the messages and whether he or she wants to retrieve the message, play the message, erase the message, store the message, forward, reply, or otherwise act on the message. The user is also given control over the messages stored remotely from the paging transceiver and can erase or store these messages from the paging transceiver. The paging transceiver may have a timer for allowing the user to program the paging transceiver to perform a desired function on a message at a particular time.

The information initially sent to the user may also indicate the location of the stored message. For instance, the system paging a particular paging transceiver to notify it that a page has been received need not be the system actually storing the content of the message. Instead, a plurality of systems may store the contents of messages with one or more of the systems paging the paging transceiver. The paging transceiver would be provided sufficient information on the system storing the message so that it can communicate with this system. The system paging the paging transceiver can therefore act as a clearinghouse for other messaging systems by notifying a user of all messages received regardless of their source or type.

Accordingly, it is an object of the present invention to provide systems and  
a . methods for paging that conserve memory in ~~pager transceivers~~  
~~pager receivers.~~

It is another object of the present invention to provide systems and methods for  
paging that conserve valuable air time.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide systems and methods  
for paging that provide users with remote control over their messages.

It is yet another object of the present invention to provide systems and methods  
for paging that allow users to select when and how action should be taken on their  
messages.

It is yet a further object of the present invention to provide messaging systems  
and methods for notifying users of received messages.

It is also an object of the present invention to provide messaging systems and  
a . methods for providing control to users over messages stored at remote locations.

It is still another object of the present invention to provide messaging systems  
and methods that notify users of messages received from multiple sources.

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The accompanying drawings, which are incorporated in and form a part of the  
specification, illustrate preferred embodiments of the present invention and, together  
with the description, serve to explain the principles of the invention. In the drawings:

Fig. 1 is a block diagram of a paging transceiver according to a preferred

embodiment of the invention;

Fig. 2 is a more detailed block diagram of the transceiver in the paging transceiver of Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is a block diagram of a communication system according to a preferred embodiment of the invention;

Figs. 4A and 4B are flow charts depicting an exemplary set-up routine for establishing communications between the system of Fig. 3 and the transceiver of Fig. 1;

Fig. 5 is a flow chart depicting a paging process;

Fig. 6 a flow chart depicting of process of notifying a paging transceiver of an unread message;

Fig. 7 is a flow chart depicting a process of receiving a page at the paging transceiver of Fig. 1;

Fig. 8 is a flow chart depicting a process of selecting a function at the paging transceiver of Fig. 1;

Fig. 9 is a generic flow chart depicting a selective process performed at the paging transceiver of Fig. 1 for executing a desired function;

Fig. 10 is a block diagram of a paging system having multiple systems for storing messages; and

Fig. 11 is a diagram of a data transmission for the system in Fig. 10.

[illegible][illegible][illegible]

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messaging application, such as a video display, camera, scanner, a printer, or a voice recognition device. The user interface 3 is not limited to these examples of user input/output devices but may comprise any input or output device which allows or assists communication between the user and the paging transceiver 100.

The transceiver 2 is connected to, and communicates with, the controller 4, which preferably comprises a digital signal processor (DSP) 4. The memory 5 is connected to the DSP 4 and is for storing messages or other types of information. The memory 5 may comprise static RAM, Dynamic RAM, Flash RAM, or any type of memory suitable for storing messages and allowing the retrieval of the messages. The amount of the memory 5 is preferably at least 4 MB for voice or text applications, although it may consist of a greater or lesser amount depending upon the specific message type application.

The transceiver 2, as shown in more detail in Fig. 2, includes an antenna interface 20 connected to the antenna 1. The antenna interface 20 directs signals received from antenna 1 to a receiver section 21 of the paging transceiver 100 and directs signals transmitted from a transmit section 24 to the antenna 1. The antenna interface 20 is preferably a duplexer, however an antenna switch or other device may be utilized to provide signal isolation between the receiver and transmitter sections 21 and 24. Alternatively, if paging transceiver 100 includes two antennas 1 with one for transmitting signals and the other for receiving signals, the transceiver 2 would not require any type of antenna interface 20.

The receive section 21 includes a receiver 22 and a receiver frequency synthesizer 23. The receiver 22 is connected to the antenna 1 through antenna interface 20 and receives the signals directed to the paging transceiver 100. The receiver frequency synthesizer 23, based on an input from a processor 27, selects the frequency at which the receiver 22 receives signals. The received signals are passed from the receiver 22 to the processor 27.

The transmit section 24 includes a transmitter 25 for receiving signals from the processor 27. The transmit section 24 also includes a transmitter frequency synthesizer 26 connected to the transmitter 25 which, based upon an input from the processor 27, selects the transmit frequency for the transmitter 25. The signals output by the transmitter 25 are supplied to the antenna interface 20 and then to the antenna 1.

The processor 27 comprises a central processing unit (CPU) having internal memory and switching capabilities. The CPU 27, for instance, comprises all necessary RAM and ROM memory, signal and data switching circuitry, signal processing circuitry, I-O Ports, and all standard program instructions and stored options commonly utilized in portable cellular telephones. The standard cellular telephone program instructions and CPU 27 may be obtained from a variety of suppliers. For instance, the instructions may be obtained from Wireless Link Inc. of Sunnyvale, California and the CPU 27 from GEC Plessey Semiconductor, Inc. of Scotts Valley, California.

The DSP 4 includes necessary I-O and program memory and are commonly utilized in cellular telephones. Any suitable DSP may be used in the paging transceiver 100. Alternatively, the controller 4 may comprise another type of electronic device, such as a codec or digital-to-analog/analog-to-digital conversion circuit or other type of modulator-demodulator including memory interface circuitry coupled to message memory 5 for reading and writing of messages.

The transceiver 2 also preferably includes a delay circuit 28. The delay circuit 28 may comprise a timer which informs the processor 27 of when a period of time has expired. The timer, for instance, may expire at a certain time of day, week, or month, or may expire a fixed period of time after a triggering event, such as one hour after the event. The time at which the timer 28 expires is preferably programmable through the user interface 3 and through processor 27. Additionally, the timer 28 preferably comprises a plurality of timers for notifying the processor 27 of when a plurality of different time periods have expired. Rather than a timer, the delay circuit 28 may alternatively operate to delay the occurrence of an event until a certain condition is satisfied. This condition, for instance, may be the strength of received signals or the receipt of a specified signal. The purpose of the timer 28 will become apparent from the description below.

With reference to Fig. 3, a system 30 according to a preferred embodiment of the invention is interconnected to a base station 34, both of which are connected to the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) or to other telephone company

equipment 35. The system 30 comprises a paging terminal controller 31 which may comprise a controller circuit and associated memory having a database of subscriber listings and corresponding selective call address fields. The paging terminal controller 31 communicates with storage and retrieval unit 32 and correlates messages with subscriber listings. The storage and retrieval unit 32 may comprise a CPU or control circuit, message information and program memory, memory interface circuitry and a DSP with appropriate operational code for storage and retrieval of the desired messages. The input/output controller 33 contains all necessary input and output circuitry such as encoders and decoders, modems and required routing and control circuitry for communicating with the paging terminal controller 31, the storage and retrieval unit 32, the PSTN 35, and the base station 34.

A call setup routine 40 for establishing communication between the system 30 and base station 34 will now be described with reference to Figs. 4A and 4B. At step 41, a connection, such as a telephone connection, is routed through the PSTN 35 or in the case of paging transceiver 100 the switch 36, to the input/output controller 33. The input/output controller 33 determines at step 42 whether the connection is with an automated signaling device or with a person. If the connection is with a person, then at step 48 the storage and retrieval unit 32 is activated to produce one or more voice responses during the call in order to guide the person throughout the process.

If, at step 42, the input/output controller 33 determines that the call is from a device, such as a paging transceiver 100 or computer terminal, data is exchanged

between the paging transceiver 100 and system 30 at step 43. The type of data that may be exchanged includes, but is not limited to, the following types of data: identification data, command data, and information data. The data supplied from the PSTN 35 may also be exchanged at step 43 with this data including data for identifying the caller and subscriber, such as, for example, Caller ID and DNIS (Dialed Number Identification Service). Additionally, the data may be extracted from the base station 34. For example, the location of the paging transceiver 100 may be determined from a home location registry (HLR) and the HLR data may be utilized by the system 30 in order to determine the location of the paging transceiver 100, as opposed to having the paging transceiver 100 supply the location information to system 30.

After data is exchanged at step 43, the system 30 determines at step 44 whether an error occurred during the transmission between the system 30 and paging transceiver 100. If an error did occur, then at step 47 the process ends and the paging transceiver 100 is informed of the error. The error is preferably presented to the user in the form of status information produced at the user interface 3, such as with an alert tone or visual display on the LED or LCD display. An error may include, but is not limited to, the following errors: "system busy," "wrong ID," or "bill over due." If no error is detected, as determined by the system 30 at step 44, a function is enabled and executed at step 45. The function, as will be described in greater detail below with reference to Fig. 8, may be selected by the user from a group of available functions.



data corresponding to the intended paging transceiver 100 at step 55. Also at step 55, a flag is set in a transmission stack file at the paging terminal controller 31 for subsequently transmitting selective call signals representative of the selective call data to the targeted paging transceiver 100. Housekeeping is performed by the system 30 and the call ends at step 56.

The base station 34, as shown in Fig. 3, comprises a switch 36, a transceiver antenna 37, and a transceiver base station 38. In response to a received message, the system 30 passes control information to switch 36 for setting up a page call. The switch 36, for instance, may be a mobile telephone switching office (MTSO) for interfacing to the transceiver base station 38. In the send page mode, selective call signals having an address associated with the paging transceiver 100 are transmitted. The address may be an address code for a paging transceiver, a mobile telephone number (MIN) for a mobile radiotelephone, or type of identifying information for a communication device.

Command data and information data may also be communicated from the system 30 to the paging transceiver 100 through the base station 34. The command data and information data shall hereinafter be referred to as CI data, examples of which include the following: paging transceiver location, forward message, retrieve message, reply to message, paging transceiver ID, message identifiers, retrieval instructions, save message, erase message, message type, message length, time/date message received, system 30 ID, system 30 location, message address, message







radiotelephone network, the selective call signals may alternatively be routed to a paging system for transmitting an address code and CI data over an independent paging transmitter. In such a configuration, the paging transceiver 100 may be configured to have a separate paging receiver or transceiver compatible with the paging transmitter or paging transceiver. Since radio pager devices require much less energy than portable cellular telephones, a paging transceiver 100 configured with a low energy paging receiver would reduce energy required for receiving selective call signals and allow high energy circuitry of the paging transceiver 100 to be turned off until the user needs to retrieve or transmit messages. Other variations and modifications will be apparent to those skilled in the art.

A process 90 for receiving messages at a paging transceiver 100 is shown in Fig. 7. A selective call signal including an address is received by receive section 21 of the transceiver 100 at step 91. At step 92, the demodulated signal is processed by the CPU 27 to compare the received address with an address code stored in the CPU 27 memory. If the received address code does not match the stored address, flow returns to step 91 and the transceiver 100 continues to monitor transmissions for its address. When the address corresponds to the pre-stored address code, as determined at step 92, the CPU 27 stores and processes any corresponding received CI data at step 93.

Next, at step 94, the CPU 27 determines if an acknowledgment transmission is required by the paging transceiver 100. The CPU 27 may always enable an

acknowledgment in order to confirm at the system 30 or base station 34 that the selective call signals were received by the targeted paging transceiver 100.

Alternatively, the CPU 27 may never enable an acknowledgment from the transceiver 100, which is useful in explosive environments where transmissions are dangerous and in environments where a reply from the paging transceiver 100 may cause harmful interference to other electronic equipment. The CPU 27 may, as another option, enable an acknowledgment only when acknowledgment data is contained within the received CI data, such as with a remote request. Finally, the CPU 27 may enable an acknowledgment in response to a user-enabled command.

Returning to step 94, if the paging transceiver 100 allows for an acknowledgment then at step 95 the CPU 27 determines whether the acknowledgment is required or if the acknowledgment is a user option. If the acknowledgment is required to be automatic, then an acknowledgment flag is set at step 97. If, on the other hand, the acknowledgment is not automatic but rather optional, then at step 96 the CPU 27 determines whether an acknowledgment has been enabled. If the acknowledgment has been enabled, then the acknowledgment flag is set in step 97.

At step 98, the CPU 27 determines whether short messages may be transmitted. Short messages may include CI data or any type of short coded message which was pre-stored by the user in the paging transceiver 100. If short messages are enabled, at step 99 the CPU 27 sets the short message flag. At step 100, the paging transceiver 100 transmits all flagged data, including CI data, to the base station 34 for



to 117, the system 30 may act upon the entire information or, alternatively, may instead operate on only the message identifier. For instance, if the user selected the desired action of forwarding a message, the system 30 may send the entire message to a designated recipient or may instead send just the message identifier.

Fig. 9 depicts processing performed by the paging transceiver 100 in response to the selection of any one of the functions 112 to 117 shown in Fig. 8. At step 131, the function is identified by the CPU 27 and other processing occurs prior to step 132 where the CPU 27 determines whether a call is required. If a call is not required to perform the function, then at step 133 the CPU 27 performs the requested function and the process ends at step 140.

If, on the other hand, a call is required, then at step 134 the CPU 27 next determines whether a call is already in progress. If a call is in progress, the CPU 27 exchanges data 135 with the system 30 and base station 34 at step 135 and the function is performed or executed at step 136. The data that is exchanged at step 135 includes a request signal that is sent from the paging transceiver 100 to the system 30 specifying the desired action and the particular information or message. If a call is not in progress, then at step 137 the CPU 27 preferably asks the user if a call should be made and receives the user's feedback at step 138. If the user elects not to call, then a delay occurs at step 141 with delay circuit 28.

As discussed above, the delay circuit 28 may be a timer which expires at a set time, such as at 1:00 a.m., when traffic and costs are low or may expire after a period

of time, such as 1 hour. The set time or the period of time may be programmed by the user or may be determined by default values. Additionally, the delay circuit 28 may operate to delay operation until the signal strength is above a certain threshold. The delay circuit 28, in this example, may therefore comprise a level detector and a comparator circuit for comparing the signal strength to the threshold level. The delay circuit 28 would therefore advantageously delay the paging transceiver 100 from initiating communication until signal strength is sufficiently high. Moreover, the delay circuit 28 may alternatively comprise a communication monitor circuit for determining when the paging transceiver 100 is communicating before performing a function. Also, the delay circuit 28 may detect transmissions and trigger a certain event in response to a received communication. As an example, if the paging transceiver 100 receives a certain type of message or a message from a particular source or individual, the paging transceiver 100 may automatically perform a programmed action. The paging transceiver 100 would therefore be able, for instance, to automatically forward all messages received from one recipient to a designated person.

After the timer 28 is triggered or if the user decides to call now, then at step 139 the CPU 27 sets up a call to the base station 34. Once a call is established, then processing proceeds to step 135 for the exchange of data and then to step 136 for the performance or execution of the function. At step 140, the process ends. The process shown in Fig. 9 is not limited to the performance of a single function but also

represents the processing if the user selects a number of functions. For example, the user may select the functions of retrieving a message at step 114 and forwarding a message at step 112 and these functions may be performed in unison with each other or sequentially one after <sup>the</sup> each other.

The paging transceiver 100 and system 30 may exchange status information during messaging calls initiated by the paging transceiver 100 or by selective call, such as page calls, initiated by the system 30. The status information may contain information corresponding to messages stored within the paging transceiver 100 or within the system 30. For example, if the system 30 erases a message that has resided in its memory for too long a period of time, such as an unsaved, read message, the system 30 may inform the paging transceiver 100 that the message no longer exists. If the message identifier stored in the paging transceiver 100 no longer corresponds to a message stored in the system 30 or in the paging transceiver 100, the CPU 27 removes the identifier for the no-longer existing message.

When the forward message function 112 is selected, flow proceeds to step 131 where the CPU 27 reads information pertaining to the message or plurality of messages selected by the user to be forwarded. The information may include a message identifier, location data, message length, message type, destination addresses, or other CI type data as previously described. At step 132, the CPU 27 determines whether the message cannot be forwarded without communicating with the system 30. At step 134, the CPU 27 determines if a call is in progress. If a call is in progress, CI

data is exchanged at step 135 with the system 30 for forwarding messages. If the messages to be forwarded are located at the system 30, the messages are simply flagged for forwarding to the appropriate addresses. At step 136, the messages are forwarded and confirmation is communicated to the paging transceiver 100. If the message is not located at system 30, the message is transmitted from the paging transceiver 100 to system 30 at step 136 and the process ends at step 140. If at step 134, it is determined that a call is not in progress, the user is asked if the message should be forwarded now at step 137. <sup>at step 138</sup> If the user selects yes, a call is established with system 30 at step 139 and flow continues as previously described. <sup>at step 140</sup> If a call should not be made, the CPU 27 keeps the forwarding information in memory for forwarding the message during a subsequent call with system 30 and the process ends at step 140.

In operation, the user selects a message or messages to be forwarded and also selects a recipient for receiving the message. If the message resides at the system 30, the message is simply forwarded to the addressed recipient. If the message is located in the paging transceiver 100, the message is first transmitted to the system 30 at step 135 before it can be forwarded to the intended recipient. In order to conserve time, the system 30 will not accept receipt of a message from the paging transceiver 100 if the same message already exists at the system 30. The system 30 will simply perform the required function with the already present duplicate message.

If the function selected is the save message function 113, then at step 131 the message identifier to be saved is read by CPU 27. <sup>step</sup> At 132, the CPU 27 determines if

the message identifier selected corresponds to a message already stored in message memory 5 and if the selected function can be processed off-line. If yes, at step 133 the CPU 27 sets a save message flag in order to protect the message stored in message memory 5 from being over-written and the process ends at step 140.

If at step 132 the CPU 27 determines that the message is not stored at the paging transceiver 100, then at step 134 the CPU 27 determines whether a call is in progress. If a messaging call is in progress, CI data instructing the system 30 to save the message is sent. The system 30 flags the stored message and sends a message saved acknowledgment to the paging transceiver 100 at step 136. The CPU 27 converts the acknowledgment to status information and informs the user that the message is saved at the system 30 and the process ends at step 140. If at step 134, it is determined that the paging transceiver 100 is not currently in communication with the system 30, the CPU 27 flags the message identifier for saving and the user is asked if the call should be made now at step 137. If no, at step 138 the flag is kept for transmission to system 30 at a later time, such as during a selective call to the paging transceiver 100 or during a messaging call to system 30. If yes, then the CPU 27 sets up a call at step 139 for transmitting the save flag and CI data as previously described.

When the retrieve message function is selected at 114, then at step 131 the message identifiers corresponding to messages to be returned are read from the CPU 27 memory for retrieving the message. Additionally, the CPU 27 may read message location information, system ID information, address information, message length



weather information automatically retrieved during night-time hours when telephone line charges and air time charges are less expensive. The above described options may also be utilized for forwarding messages, erasing messages, saving messages, sending messages, and replying to messages as will be shown in more detail hereinafter.

With the send message function 115, in order to send a message, the message must first be stored at the paging transceiver 100 or at the system 30. The process of storing or recording messages is well known to those of ordinary skill in the art and accordingly will not be described in further detail. Examples of these devices are described in U.S. Patent No. 4,602,129 to Matthew, et al., titled "Electronic Audio Communications System With Versatile Message Delivery," and in U.S. Reissued Patent No. Re. 34,976 to Helferich et al, titled "Analog/Digital Voice Storage Cellular Telephone," both of which are incorporated herein by reference. The system 30 and paging transceiver 100 can record, store and retrieve a plurality of different types of messages as previously described depending on the application required.

If the send message function 115 is selected, the CPU 27 identifies the message to be sent and cross references it to the selected recipient address

Q information. At step 132, the CPU 27 determines whether a call is required at step

Q -132- The subsequent processing of sending a message should be apparent from the description above for forwarding a message and accordingly will not be duplicated in order to simplify description of the invention. The message to be sent may reside in

the paging transceiver 100 or in the system 30. If the message resides in the system 30 and in the paging transceiver 100, the message in the system 30 corresponding to the CPU 27 message identifier will be sent in order to conserve air time. If the message does not reside in system 30, the message will be sent from the paging transceiver 100 to the system 30. If the message is to be sent from the paging transceiver 100, the message may be a pre-stored message or alternatively, the message may be transmitted to system 30 by paging transceiver 100 in real time during a call session between system 30 and paging transceiver 100.

If the erase message is selected at step 116, the erase message function allows a user to erase messages stored at the system 30 or at the paging transceiver 100 depending on the mode of operation. A message may be erased at a paging transceiver 100 without erasing the message identifier. If a message is erased at the paging transceiver 100 and the identifier still exists in message memory 5, the message can be retrieved from the system 30. In order to remove a message identifier at the paging transceiver 100, the message must be erased at the system 30. This feature causes the user to manage the messages at the platform, thereby conserving memory space at the storage unit 32. At step 131, the selected message to be erased is identified and the user is asked if the selected message in the paging transceiver is to be erased or if both copies of the message are to be erased. If the local message only is selected to be erased, the message identification information is kept and at step 133 the CPU 27 flags the message stored in memory 5 for erasure or overwriting. In other



that the user know the address of the recipient because the message being replied to has a corresponding return address. As with the send message function 115, a reply message may be sent in real time or it may be pre-recorded and stored in the paging transceiver 100 for transmission to system 30. Additionally, the reply transmission may be delayed for a set period of time as previously described with timer 28.

In summary, as discussed above with reference to Figs. 5 and 6, the system 30 does not transmit the entire message to the paging transceiver 100 but rather notifies the user that a message is waiting. The paging transceiver 100, as discussed above with reference to Fig. 7, stores data associated with the page and possibly a short message. The user can then select a desired one of plurality of available functions, such as those shown in Fig. 8, and the paging transceiver 100 will process the request in accordance with Fig. 9.

With the system 30 and paging transceiver 100, the paging transceiver 100 can notify a user of a message without receiving the entire message. The user can then decide to act upon the message at a time convenient to the user. Rather than receiving the message with the alert, as occurs with conventional paging receivers, the user can control the time when he or she wants to receive a message and may even decide not to retrieve the message. After the user has been notified, the user can then control the paging transceiver 100 to retrieve the message from the system 30, to save the message at either the system 30 or paging transceiver 100, to forward the message to an indicated recipient, to reply to the message, or to erase the message from the

[illegible][illegible][illegible]

through base station 34 and may call the system 30 through the PSTN 35, thereby bypassing the base station 34 and its associated charges and expenses.

The paging transceiver 100 and system 30 are not limited to voice messages in a paging system. Rather, the paging transceiver 100 and system 30 may operate with any type of message or information, including, but not limited to numeric messages, alphanumeric messages, voice or other audio messages, video messages, graphics or even data. The paging transceiver 100 may be a separate paging transceiver, may be integral with a mobile radiotelephone, or may be incorporated into other devices.

For instance, the paging transceiver 100 may be integrated into a portable radio, CD, or tape player. The paging transceiver 100 could receive messages from system 30 which indicate portions of songs that may be sampled by the user. The user may browse through a listing of available music and select a desired song. The paging transceiver 100 then communicates with the system 30 to retrieve the selected song and the user can then play the song at the paging transceiver 100.

As another example, the messages may be video messages which the user can browse through and select only desired messages. The paging transceiver 100 may be integral with a television set and the video messages may be promotions for new movies or shows. Alternatively, the paging transceiver 100 may be integral with a game console and the video messages may be clips of new games that are available with that game console. Other applications for the paging transceiver 100 and system 30 will be apparent to those skilled in the art.

The information or message available to a paging transceiver 100 need not be static but instead may be dynamic. In other words, when a paging transceiver 100 is alerted that information is available, the information may be updated or otherwise change from the time that the user was alerted. As an example, the user may receive a weather alert and by the time the user decides to receive the information the information would be updated to reflect current weather conditions. The identifier for the information therefore does not limit the content that may be stored as the information available to the user.

Q. The system 30 is not limited to <sup>transmitting</sup> ~~transmitted~~ only one alert at a time to one paging transceiver 100. Instead, the system 30 may send a plurality of alerts to a single paging transceiver 100 and each of those alerts may be broadcast to a plurality of paging transceivers 100. For instance, the system 30 may broadcast information to a plurality of transceivers 100 that share a common set of numbers within their mobile identification numbers. If the system 30 sends a plurality of alerts to a paging transceiver 100, these alerts may be displayed by the user interface 3 and the user can scroll through and act upon the messages as desired.

As discussed above, the system 30 and paging transceiver 100 allows information to be remotely acted upon by the paging transceiver 100. The system 30, however, also allows users access to their information via conventional ways, such as the PSTN 35. Therefore, a user may receive the alert with a paging transceiver 100 and decide to call in through the PSTN 35 to listen or otherwise act upon the message.

The system 30 preferably is connected to the Internet whereby users can also gain access and act upon their information via the Internet.

The paging transceiver 100 preferably alerts the user both when a message identifier signal has been received and when complete messages have been received. The alerts may comprise any suitable indication to inform the user that the paging transceiver 100 has received a communication, such as a tone, vibration, or visual display. The alerts for a received identifier and for a received message are preferably different so as to allow a user to easily differentiate between the two communications.

and retrieval unit 32 and input/output controller 33 but not a paging terminal controller 31 and may page the paging transceiver 100 through the paging terminal controller 31 in system 30A. Conversely, a system 30, such as system 30A, may include a paging terminal controller 31 and an input/output controller 33 but not a storage and retrieval unit 32. Further, the input/output controller 33 need not be a separate unit but may be incorporated into the paging terminal controller 31 if the system 30 does not include a storage and retrieval unit 32, or into the storage and retrieval unit 32, if the system 30 does not include a paging terminal controller 31.

a. The systems 30 and base stations 34 may communicate with each other through the PSTN<sup>35</sup> or through links or lines other than or in addition to the PSTN<sup>35</sup>, such as through an SS7 backbone of a wireless network or through the Internet.

o. Additionally, each of the base stations 34A and 34B may be part of a paging network but <sup>are</sup> is preferably part of a cellular network. Either one or both of base stations 34A or 34B may page the paging transceiver and either one or both of the base stations 34A or 34B may deliver the contents of messages to the paging transceiver. Each of the systems 30A, 30B, and 30C may store messages on behalf of a user with the messages being of the same or different types. Furthermore, the messages stored within a single system 30 may be all the same type or may differ from each other.

As an example, system 30A may store voice mail messages and email messages directed to the user's office, system 30B may store voice mail messages directed to the user's home, and system 30C may store audio messages. The base



The data transmission 201 also includes message information. The message information includes information identifying the message and preferably also includes information specifying the type of the message, the length of the message, and the message priority. The message identification may identify the message with a unique code, such as a number, or may specify the address in system 30 for the message. The message type advantageously indicates whether the message is a voice message, email message, audio message, video message, or text message. The message length indicates the size of the message and the message priority indicates the priority level of the message. For instance, the user can designate priorities based upon the telephone number of the caller leaving the message or the priority may be set by the caller. Although the data transmission 201 preferably includes this information, the data transmission 201 may include additional or fewer fields than the example provided in Fig. 11.

The data transmission 201 also includes additional information that may be relayed and presented to the user. For instance, for many systems 30 that receive and store messages on behalf of the user, the additional descriptive information preferably comprises a return address for identifying the caller's telephone number to inform the user as to who left the message. For other systems 30 which may generate their own information, the additional information preferably describes the information available to the user. For instance, for a system 30 that allows users to sample songs, the additional information would indicate the title and the artist of the song and may also

specify the cost to retrieve and play the song. Other uses of the additional information will be apparent to those skilled in the art.

The page sent to the paging transceiver 100 includes most, if not all, of the data transmission 201. The information transmitted to the paging transceiver 100, with reference to Fig. 7, may be inserted into a short message transmitted to the user at step 98. From the system ID information, the paging transceiver 100 can determine which system 30 it needs to respond to in order to act upon a message. For instance, system 30A may page the paging transceiver 100 and indicate that system 30B has a stored message. If the user selects the function of retrieve function, then the paging transceiver 100 can contact system 30B through base station 34B to retrieve the desired message. The paging transceiver 100 as discussed above may instead respond to base station 34A to retrieve the message and base station 34A would communicate with system 30B to retrieve or otherwise act upon the message.

The message information is used by the paging transceiver 100 to inform the user of the message or information stored at the system 30. The message type, length, priority, and additional descriptive material may be displayed or otherwise indicated to the user at the paging transceiver 100. From this information, the user can decide what type of action to take upon the message or information at the system 30.

As described with reference to Fig. 9, a call to the system 30 may be required in order for the paging transceiver 100 to perform a desired function. If a call is required, the paging transceiver 100 relays information in the data transmission 201 to

the system 30. If the paging transceiver 100 responds to a system 30 other than the one storing the message or information, the paging transceiver 100 identifies the system 30 storing the message or information and also identifies the message. As discussed above, the message may be identified in a number of ways, such as with a message code or by specifying the location in memory where the message is stored. The call to the system 30 would automatically provide the transceiver identification information to the system 30, although the paging transceiver 100 could provide this information with the other information provided to the system 30.

Upon receiving a call from the paging transceiver 100, the system 30 reads the transceiver identification and message information to find the information requested by the paging transceiver 100. The information obtained from the paging transceiver 100 at the system 30 and the transfer of the requested information to the paging transceiver occurs at step 135 in Fig. 9.

The system 200 can present substantial cost savings to conventional paging systems. With a conventional paging system, the entire message is transmitted to the location of the paging transceiver 100. For instance, if the user's home base is in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and the message originates in Chicago, Illinois, then the message is typically sent over the PSTN 35 to the home base. With nationwide paging, the user may have traveled to San Diego, California whereby the home base would then send the entire message from Chapel Hill to San Diego. With system 200, on the other hand, only the data transmission 201 is transmitted from Chicago to



The forgoing description of the preferred embodiments of the invention has been presented only for the purpose of illustration and description and is not intended to be exhaustive or to limit the invention to the precise forms disclosed. Many modifications and variations are possible in light of the above teaching.

The embodiments were chosen and described in order to explain the principles of the invention and their practical application so as to enable others skilled in the art to utilize the invention and various embodiments and with various modifications as are suited to the particular use contemplated.

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